The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

VOL. III. (New Series.) No. 1. JANUARY, 1905. PRICE ONE PENNY.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE.
1.	A Thanksgiving. Poem	1
2.	The Far Look and the Near. Sermon. Rev. J. Wood	1
3.	Witness to the Truth. Poem	4
4.	Behind and Before. Poem	5
5.	Sunday School Lessons, II.	5
6.	The Life that now is	7
7.	Addison	8
8.	Milton at Chalfont	10
9.	Notes of Guild Addresses	11
10.	Seed Corn	13
11.	Modulation	13
12.	Notes and Jottings	14
13.	Guild News	15
14.	News from the Field	16

A Thanksgiving.

That Thou has brought us through another year,
That Thou has lifted now and then the haze
Which hangs between our eyes and future days;
That Thou hast made our pathway sometimes clear,
And we have walked a while in pleasant ways,
We thank Thee.

That Thou hast kept our eyelids sometimes sealed
'Gainst sights we begged with streaming tears to see;
That Thou hast kept Thy secrets safe with Thee,
And shown us, when our hearts at last were healed,
That Thou wert wiser in Thy plans than we,
We thank Thee.

That nothing great or small eludes Thine eyes,
Which look to where the deeps within us dwell,
And mark the thoughts we have not words to tell,
For that Thine ears are turned toward human cries,
That Thou art wise and doest all things well,
We thank Thee.

—*Virginia M. Cornell.*

Every day is a fresh beginning;
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain,
And, spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted and possible pain,
Take heart with the day and begin again.

—*Susan Coolidge.*

The Far Look and the Near.

A NEW YEAR ADDRESS.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH WOOD.

Psalm cxxl., 1—"*I will lift mine eyes unto the hills.*"

Once again we stand on the threshold of a New Year, and however sad and disappointing the past, we turn with unquenchable hope towards the future. It may be that the old year has been for us a year of sunshine. Our enterprises have prospered; our friendships have yielded only sweetness; we are conscious of some mental gains. Our homes have been unstricken by aught of ill, and when in the still midnight the bells were heard ringing out the old and ringing in the new, we were loth to bid farewell to the old, so happy had we been in it. The old year perhaps gave you a new friend, or a new and beautiful experience, and you said:

"A happier year I shall not see:
And though his eyes are waxing dim,
And though his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me."

There are others who are glad to be done with the old year. To them it was but a dark and cloudy year, in which the sun of happiness shone only at rare intervals, in which dear hopes were smitten, in which the failure of well-meant plans, or the anguish of bereave-

ment, have left their mark upon us. And when the bells rung out we thought to ourselves, "Ah! toll the funeral of the wretched past, and let a deep grave be dug for it"—

"Rock," I said, "thy ribs are strong;
That I bring thee, guard it long.
Hide the light from buried eyes—
Hide it, lest the dead arise.
Year," I said, and turned away,
"I am free of thee to-day;
All that we two only know,
I forgive and I forego,
So thy face no more I meet
In the field or in the street."

* * * * *

Another year is before us. Well, a year does not count for much in the history of a world. But in the longest human life it counts for a great deal; its issues cannot but be of lasting importance. He must be dull of heart who can make the passage from the old year into the new and not feel stirred, nor ask himself many questions, nor for a moment be touched by the seriousness and pathos of human life. How many of us will be here on the last day of this new year? What may or may not await us between this day and that? What successes, failures, disappointments, and surprises? Perhaps some access of fortune which we now have no idea; perhaps the forfeiture of all we most love in the world! If we could lift the veil what should we see? Oh! would we lift the veil if we could?

The new change that we make in dating our letters on the first of January, when we turn 1904 into 1905, should give us pause. Of course Time passes whether we think of it or not. And it is always passing, just as much on the 30th of June as on the 30th of December. The divisions by which we mark its progress, if they have their grounds in nature, are, in their form, more or less artificial. But the fact to which they call attention is independent of us. Yet as we cannot always be thinking of the march of Time, it is well, now and then, and at definite intervals, that we should be compelled to think of it, since we may draw from the thought lessons both of warning and encouragement.

In all its details the future is unknown to us. The events of this coming year are as utterly beyond us as the events of a hundred years hence. And yet we know some things; we know that whatever happens the seasons will follow one another as before; there will be sowing and reaping, summer and winter, labour and weariness. We know, further, that the new year will not have gone far before we shall need courage and patience. Temper will be tried this new year; charity will be put to strain; duty will be difficult; and some of us will be burdened with toil, and others beguiled with pleasure. One thing we are certain of; it will not be a year in which we can get on without God, and it is an unspeakable comfort when facing the unknown future to be able to say, "At any rate God is there, ruling, loving, directing." Better than any glimpses or foreshadowings of the future is it to feel this conviction of a Divine Presence. For many and many a time it will be needful to "lift our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help."

I pray you to think of those hills—the hills which are so often forgotten, so often obscured by mists from earth, but which are for us all our great storehouse of help.

It is a great thing for us to realise that they are there!

What would you think of a man on a long, wearisome journey who never by any chance lifted his eyes from the dusty road at his feet to the distant hills or to the witchery of the blue sky? Who was so occupied with picking his steps along the turnpike as never to note the flying clouds, nor the landscape beyond, nor the wonderful phantasmagoria of the spangled heavens? How dull, how monotonous is the way; how heavily he goes! Yet there are men in life so occupied with the petty and numerous details at their feet as never to lift their eyes to the glorious hills that bound the horizon; men to whom cares and engagements, and business and the excitement of the daily traffic are so much that they have lost sight of the great and lofty things of human life. They never see life as a whole; they only see it in fragments. They never ask of its great purposes, only of its daily details. They are like men with their eyes glued to the turnpike, who do not even know that there are great hills all around, and a blue sky above their heads.

In Browning's "Sordello," that immensely tough bit of reading, there are just four simple lines, and they are these:—

"God has conceded two sights to a man;
One of man's whole work, Time's completed plan;

The other of the minute's work, man's first
Step to the plan's completion."

We have two sights in view; we look for the far-off Ideal, and we look also upon the present Reality; we gaze on the hills in the distance to which we direct our course, but we observe also the wild flowers and the mile-stones of the high road. Only be sure man's danger is rarely that the far sight will shut out the near; rather it is that the near, the minute's work, the dusty highway will blind us to the "mountain-range, unutterably bright."

You know how it is in landscape painting—there is a foreground and a background. And every artist will tell you how both are important, and yet how a neglected foreground may be better excused than a neglected background. To have the foreground minutely and delicately painted, and yet to have a weak background of woolly hills or paste-board sky is disastrous. It is better to have a good bit of sky, or a fine suggestion of mountains, then a foreground which has absorbed all the painter's skill and time—although it is better to have both.

How full are the great hills of mystery and awe, but how full also of bounty and blessing. They stand around the level plains of daily life, robed in deep clouds, the home of wandering winds and purple shadows, flowing down with water, feeding the valley with springs. They make the background of almost every fine landscape. Here at our feet are the stones and flowers, the ant and bee, the running brook, a thousand forms of life and a thousand daily activities. But in the distance the wide and busy valley leads up to the mountain slopes, the granite hills standing there like sentinels, and on them the valley depends for shelter, for moisture, for the yearly enriching of its soil. And man has two sights, and every true human life takes both into account.

In the press, and throng, and hurry, and excitement of our daily affairs we are in danger of losing sight of the everlasting hills—that is, the eternal principles, the strong, steadfast, immutable laws of Truth and Right, the immortal source of help and refreshing. Present realities absorb us; ideals are forgotten; principles are obscured, and attention is concentrated on the foreground. The things close at hand are so engrossing that we fail to remember the great hopes and impulses, the larger outlook, the destiny for which we are making ready. The far sight is not to make us indifferent to the near, and, indeed, that is not our danger in the 20th century. It may have been true of some earlier age that the contemplation of God and heaven, and the soul's destiny, and the hopes and fears and joys of the spiritual world made men careless of truth, and right, and duty, and the work of the world which must be carried on here and now. Our danger is exactly the opposite. For one who leaves out the foreground to-day, there are ten who leave out the background; for one who neglects the immediate details to look up to the hills there are a thousand whose eyes are so fixed upon the details as never to see the hills at all. Our danger is not that the life of to-day will be neglected, but that life's outlook, meaning, and principles—the hills from whence cometh our help—will never be visited, never gazed upon, never remembered. The details of life *must* be, and must be attended to; and yet they are our danger. They are so imperative, so importunate, so innumerable. With loud voice they cry, "Attend to us!" And indeed, it is perilous not to attend. But what of the hills? What of the ideals? The far sight is for eternity; the near sight for to-day. The one is the everlasting Righteousness; the other is the multitude of daily affairs. But that which is near is so vivid and urgent that it often becomes our all, while the powers, realities and principles of eternal life, the things which inspire and exalt, are forgotten, although they are the one thing needful. This does not mean that the present, with its immediate demands, is not good—but it does mean that beyond our little affairs there are the great principles to which they ought to be linked; that beyond to-day is eternity; that beyond this greedy and devouring present there is a solemn, illimitable future. Commerce, labour, art, pleasure, business—these have their legitimate place; but above them, yet sending down freshening winds and reviving waters and purifying influence into their midst, are the great eternal, imperishable things, God, conscience, prayer, righteousness, the invisible holiness, the immortal love, the

great moral and spiritual forces by which men and nations truly live.

Look, look to the hills! Think not that to gaze sometimes into the distance will make you less ready for your near and daily work. The great ideals of life make harmonious and luminous the details of life. No task is well done without heavenly impulse; no duty can afford to dispense with great motives. Look to the hills from whence cometh help!

Witness to the Truth.

"We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

A certain witness before a court of justice, describing the incident he was summoned to testify upon, went on to say, "I thought" this or that; when he was instantly stopped by the counsel: "We don't want to know what you thought: tell us what you know!" He had just been sworn to "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth;" and this, he was given thus sharply to understand, did not include his own opinion about the truth. That formula, in its incessant repetition in the ears of every witness, is a standing confession that what society wants most, and demands first of all, is simple *truth of fact*.

"Opinion in good men," says Milton, "is truth in the making." But for the uses of human life what we generally want is truth *ready-made*. And it occurred to this witness, in thinking over the matter afterwards, that it is just the same with truth as to the order of the universe, the law of life, the obligation of virtue, the destiny of the soul or of the world: once sifted down, what we say about these things, on which we spend so much of our rhetoric or our sentiment, is a statement of what is true or false in fact, as much as the testimony of a witness in an action for asssult and battery. For any real or permanent use, its value depends not on the eloquence or pathos with which he states it, but on whether it is true or false; on the pains he has taken to test its truth; on his ability to make the fact of the case clear to other minds besides his own.

In the revolution of religious thought which we have been going through in the last half-century, there has been a good deal among us of "truth in the making," as distinct from truth ready-made, or, at least, taken for granted. This freedom of ours has had its inconvenience as well as its advantage—the inconvenience, in particular, of regarding religious truth as truth of opinion merely, or of sentiment merely, and not as truth of fact; so that one is often tempted to cry out, as the lawyer did in court, "We don't want to know what you think about it: tell us what you know!"

The great and powerful churches, Catholic or Calvinist, have never made the mistake here hinted at. Their system of religious authority, or religious terror, is built up on the assertion of facts, or what are meant to be taken as facts. The great strength of their appeal, or their claim to obedience, has always rested on the matter-of-fact way in which the assertions of the creed are taken for granted. Even where the creed has been sublimated into a mere semblance or ghost of dogma, "without body or bones," one is often struck with the great advantage its professors have, from their inherited habit of taking their foundations for granted, and with it a business-like tone in their appeal, which too many of us have lost. But what a force this is when the creed means something real and substantial! "Cock-sure? of course I am!" I heard Mr. Spurgeon say once; "do you suppose I would say anything here that I didn't know?" A few years ago a very intelligent observer in the north of Ireland was drawn by curiosity to hear a revivalist who was driving the neighbourhood frantic with religious terror. To his surprise, he found nothing at all of sensational appeal or impassioned declamation; but a quiet, business-like setting forth of the Divine judgments, which the speaker assumed that he knew all about, exactly in the tone in which a surgeon would explain to his patient the necessity of a serious operation which he had got to suffer.

The task of the religious teacher is to testify what he has seen, and what his hands have handled of the Word of Life. Most likely he has no opinions on matters of theory that are worth much to anybody else—apart from the main body of wholesome opinion generally admitted—whatever be their value to himself. Yet, such as they are, they have cost him pains, and he is very apt to plume himself on the

many things he thinks more than on the few things he has seen and known. "But what shall I do with my Coleridge?" asked a beginner, fresh from the theological school, of a wise, eloquent, and famous preacher. The answer was to the general effect that theories of the universe, or of the Divine Life, may well make the atmosphere of his religious thinking; but the real business of it is with those facts of daily life, the sight of which is common and open to all men. In a collection of Sermons, of some years back, I find the following passage, which I copy here to enforce what has been already said:

"One might well doubt and question with himself whether he is able to hold and declare the great faith of Eternity amidst the wrecks of Time; at least, whether the truth he is able to retain as the outcome of all his questionings shall be also a Gospel, of power to save his own soul alive, and to afford an answer of strength and comfort to other hearts and lives besides his own: to do it, too, in simple honesty and sincerity with himself, knowing as he must the endless differences and uncertainties that hang upon every point of speculative opinion. My business here, then, must be to teach not what I think, but some few things I know. My opinions, such as they are, are not worth much, I think, to anybody but myself; and my speculations, such as they are, are worth still less. I should be ashamed to offer either of them as the message I am expected to bring. But the great Book of Life lies open before us all. In that book I have been a student for more than fifty years. And one must have been a sorry student, who should not have carried away some lessons that are no longer matters of opinion with him. Those lessons are some of them noble and inspiring; some, very grave and stern; some, profound in their application to our pity or sorrow or fear. It is not a teacher's business to mince matters. He must take those lessons as the Lord of Life reads them out to him. He must declare the Law of Life as it is made known to him—as it is, not as he thinks it ought to be."

J. H. A.

If we cannot live so as to be happy, let us at least live so as to deserve happiness.—*Fichte.*

Behind and Before.

"One thing I do; the things behind forgetting
And reaching forward to the things before,
Unto the goal, the prize of God's high calling,
Onward I press," said that great soul of yore.

And in the heart, like strains of martial music,
Echo the words of courage, trust, and cheer,
The while we stand, half hoping, half regretting,
Between the coming and the parting year.

Behind are joys, fond hopes that found fulfilment,
Sweet fellowships, glad toil of hand and brain,
Unanswered prayers, burdens of loss and sorrow,
Faces that look no more in ours again.

Before us lie the hills, sunlit with promise,
Fairer fulfilments than the past could know,
New growths of soul, new leadings of the Spirit,
And all the glad surprises God will show.

All we have done, or nobly failed in doing,
All we have been, or bravely striven to be,
Makes for our gain, within us still surviving
As power and larger possibility.

All, all shall count: the mingled joy and sorrow
To force of finer being rise at last;
From the crude ores in trial's furnace smelted
The image of the perfect life is cast.

"Onward I press, the things behind forgetting,
And reaching forward to the things before":
Ring the brave words like strains of martial music
As we pass through the New Year's opened door.

—*F. L. Hosmer.*

Sunday School Lessons.

II.

THE HOME OF JESUS.

Lesson Text.—"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."—*Luke ii., 52.*

And little dream the village folk,
Upon the hillside brown,
What wondrous fame their Jesus' name
Shall bring to Nazareth town.

John W. Chadwick.

I. Work and Experience.

Two marvellous events relating to the infancy of Jesus are related: one, Luke ii., 25-39, and Matthew ii., 12-22. The first is the miraculous recognition of Jesus as the Messiah in the Temple by Simeon and Anna. The second is known as Herod's killing of little children. It is a curious fact that, aside from these unhistorical stories, of the first twelve years of Jesus' life but one

event is told to us: that is, the visit to the Temple, which we shall treat in a separate lesson. Of the succeeding eighteen years, not one ray of light falls except incidentally. Those who knew Jesus say, after hearing Him, "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark vi., 23.) That one term, "carpenter," goes to prove that Jesus learned the trade which his father pursued. In Palestine the rule was that boys should be taught a trade; and naturally Jesus learned from his father. While there are great discussions over many parts of the life of Jesus, concerning his childhood there is hardly any disagreement. All writers agree that Jesus was obedient at home; helped His father at work; thought deeply of what He saw; and matured for his great work, even as we read, "The child grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." There are many stories told in the Apocrypha about this part of Jesus' life—how He made birds out of clay, and clapped his hands, and then they flew away like real birds. Other marvels are narrated by authors who tried to fill up what is silent and unknown. He lived the kind of life that the children of peasant parents in such a retired town always live. They had their games and pleasures, their duties and discipline. Quiet, humble, simple, but faithful and true, was such a Galilean home. Jesus, no doubt, climbed the hill near His home, and looked far away, and wondered. Of meditative mind, he stood at the well, and listened to the talk of the people. As Farrar says, "In the quiet round of daily duties, in well-trained prayerfulness, like Moses in the wilderness, like Daniel among the sheepfolds, like Amos in the sycamore groves," Jesus was advancing in years and wisdom.

II. A Galilean Home.

The way in which to imagine a home such as Jesus lived in as a boy is to think of just the opposite of our own life. Here in Nazareth the houses were up on heights, and consisted of one story, and frequently only one room to a house. There were no glass windows, no furniture such as we have, no paved sidewalks and streets—indeed, none of the many appointments which make up a modern house. You enter, and find little chests, bowls, coverlets wrapped up, curious cooking implements, and everything for sleeping, cooking, and living in one or two rooms. The houses were built of yellow-white limestone, obtained near by, which needed constant repair. There were no chairs or tables, no knives or forks. Fingers were used in eating. People sat round on the floor at meals. There were large jars for holding oil and honey, which took the place of butter and sugar. Generally, the sandals which were used for shoes were left at the door when any one entered. At that door was a little case containing a scrap of parchment, on which certain Scripture verses were written. The roof was made partly of earth, partly of twigs. On this upper outdoor story a great deal of comfort was obtained. In the hot nights there is where the inmates slept. Indeed, very much of the eating and sleeping through the hottest weather was done on this story.

III. Nazareth.

Palestine was in three great divisions. The upper part was Galilee, the middle Samaria, and the lower portion Judea. Nazareth was in the centre of Galilee, a little hill village of great beauty. Galilee was noted for its great fertility. There were orchards of all kinds. Figs and grapes could be gathered ten months in the year. In a word, the variety of its products called forth the admiration of all who ever visited that region. Josephus allowed his imagination to overcome him, and he estimated the number of people living in this little paradise at three millions. This is too large; but we may safely say that Galilee was the richest and most populous part of Palestine. It was common ground for travellers and caravans. Traders and wanderers from all parts of Syria, Arabia, and the East passed through this district. It is easy to believe that Jesus in his younger years came in contact with this stream of activity.

IV. How Nazareth was Viewed.

Despite the rich fields and noted characters of Galilee, the people of this district were laughed at by the Judeans. Of course, Samaria was hostile to both Galilee and Judea; but it would be supposed that those of the lower part of Palestine would admire the beauties and worth of the upper part. Not so. The spirit of Judea was ecclesiastical, critical, and scornful. We remember the proverb recorded in John's Gospel—"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" But there was far more ability in the Galilean stock than among the tradition-burdened inhabitants of Judea. It was out of this unspoiled honesty, sincerity, and poetic aspiration that the great Prophet should more naturally come.

V. Class Talks.

What language did Jesus speak? Was a country village more favourable to his childhood than Jerusalem? What was the relation of Samaria to other parts of Palestine? Where did Joseph carry on his work? What are the chief differences between Orient and Occident life? Can you not see various references to this home life in the parables and illustrations used by Jesus? (See Matthew x., 29; xxiv., 41; vi., 28, 29, and many other passages.)

VI. Lesson Topics and Review.

I. The three divisions of Palestine.
II. Locate Nazareth.
III. Describe a Galilean home.
IV. The daily life and work of Jesus.
V. How the Nazarenes were viewed.
VI. Influence of the travel through Galilee.
VII. Memorise Luke ii., 40.

The Life that now is.

One of the greatest blessings that the new year could bring to any of us would be a deepened sense of the value and beauty of the life that is our own now—the life that we may live day by day and every day. It is a blessing, too, that depends on ourselves alone; for the beauty and value are there, needing only our recognition. As one looks back over the years that have gone, he mourns less over the actual deprivations that he has endured than over the opportunities once offered that never returned, the blessings unappreciated until they had taken their flight, the good that he might have done, but neglected to do, the love he ought to have cherished, the gratitude he ought to have expressed, the joy he missed in the eager striving for something a little different. It is marvellous, when one stops to think about it, that we are forever underestimating the good we have in reaching out for that we have not. If we mean to have real happiness in life at all, in the one life that we have to live here, we must needs take that happiness as it comes, and not postpone it until we can arrange its conditions a little more to our liking.

It may well be that we need more money, for instance, in order to enter that richer world of opportunity of which we dream; but we must be careful lest we find too late that something more than money is needed, and that, in our too eager search, we have lost something infinitely more precious. The mother of little children sometimes misses the fulness of joy that belongs to her by right divine, in the crowding anxieties and perplexities of an overburdened life. But it will not wait for her. The children grow up and into their own lives. Life becomes easier for her in many ways, and the happiness of motherhood may only deepen with the advancing years. Yet, if she has missed the sweetness of the baby days, when the little ones were close about her, that at least can never return. Every succeeding period of life brings its own opportunities and advantages; and it is equally folly for youth to scorn its present in longing for the future, or for a riper age to waste itself in unavailing regret for what is past.

Sometimes people are superstitiously afraid to admit that they are well or happy, lest health or happiness should vanish. It ought to be just the other way; and, indeed, in actual experience, it is far more likely to be true that, if we do not claim and acknowledge the happiness within our grasp, we may later be silent with more reason.

In a modern version of the story of the "Sleeping Beauty," one of the gifts with which the good fairies endow the little princess is thus expressed: "She shall have the seeing eyes, and find beauty everywhere." Hardly any gift could be more desirable than one which should open our eyes to the beauty immediately surrounding us, embosoming us—to use the Emersonian phrase. A love for nature goes far in quieting the inner tumult of the mind, wakened by study of books, or eager contact with the world of action. He can never be unhappy whose heart is thrilled by the sight of the silent stars, keeping their eternal watches in the evening skies, or who is aglow with a new sense of freedom and power every time he seeks the companionship of mountain or sea, making them contribute their full share to the happiness which each man feels is his rightful due.

The seeing eyes would not only help us to discover the beautiful opportunities of our own lives, but they would awaken our appreciation of the lives around us. How quick we are to detect the beauty and saintliness of such a character, for instance, as "Dinah Morris," in "Adam Bede"—so earnest, simple, sincere, a benediction to every soul she meets. But while in fiction we recognise the saints for what they are, in real life we often fail to appreciate them until death throws its illumination over the pathway behind us, and we see that we have walked with angels.

To dwell on the beauty and blessing of life is not necessarily to ignore the sadness or suffering of the world. There is no beauty in selfishness, and looking for real beauty ought to cure us of that. The seeing eyes will discover ways to let the sunshine into darkened places, and to cheer many a stricken heart. The chemistry of love can sometimes change even the worst of sorrow, even sin itself, into something not out of harmony with the beauty that endures.

Our Hymn Writers.

V.

Joseph Addison (1672-1719.)

Addison was educated at Oxford, where his favourite walk in the grounds of Magdalen College still bears his name. His intention was to enter the Church, and in early manhood he wrote :—

"I leave the arts of poetry and verse
To them that practice them with more success;
Of greater truths I'll now propose to tell,
And so at once, dear friend and muse, farewell."

Influential and political friends, however, persuaded him against an ecclesiastical career; but though never in Orders, he was more or less a preacher all his days. Thackeray called him "This parson in the tye-wig."

He is best remembered as one of the greatest of essayists, whose style is a model of English prose, clear, limpid, flowing. As a hymn-writer he is known by four compositions, one of which, "The spacious fermament on high," is one of the finest paraphrases ever written. Yet, strange to say, it is omitted from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, while not one of Addison's is included in *The Congregational Church Hymnal*. The ways of Hymnal Editors are inscrutable. But to leave out of any collection of English hymns "The spacious fermament" is to write oneself a blockhead!

The beautiful hymn, "When all Thy mercies," appeared on August 9th, 1712, at the close of an essay in the *Spectator*, in which the following sentences occur :—"Most of the works of the Pagan poets were either direct hymns to their deities or tended indirectly to the celebration of their respective attributes and perfections . . . one would wonder that more of our Christian poets have not turned their thoughts this way." On the 19th August, Isaac Watts wrote to "Mr. Spectator" thanking him for the hymns published in previous issues, and sending a version by himself of the 114th Psalm, with the modest proviso, "If the following essay be not too incorrigible, bestow upon it a few brightenings from your genius that I may learn how to write better, or to write no more."

How are Thy servants blest, O Lord! is said in the *Spectator* to have been "made by a gentleman at the conclusion of his travels." Lord Macaulay regards it as a reminiscence of a storm Addison experienced in coasting

MILTON'S COTTAGE AT CHALFONT, ST. GILES.

between Marseilles and Genoa, when the "captain of the ship gave up all for lost." It is given in the *Spectator* in the first person, and with three additional verses, two of which run as follows :—

Thy mercy sweetened every soil,
Made every region please,
The hoary Alpine hills it warmed,
And smoothed the Tyrrhene Seas.

Think, O my soul, devoutly think,
How with affrighted eyes
Thou sawest the wide extended deep
In all its horrors rise.

Speaking of Addison and of his great hymn, Thackeray writes : "When this man looks from the world, whose weaknesses he describes so beautifully, up to the heaven which shines above us all, I can hardly fancy a human face lighted up with a more serene rapture, a human intellect thrilling with a purer love and adoration than Joseph Addison's. Listen to him : from your childhood you have known the verses ("Soon as the evening shades prevail," etc.), but who can listen to them without love and awe?

"It seems to me these verses shine like stars. They shine out of a great deep colour. When he turns to heaven a Sabbath comes over that man's mind, and his face lights up from it with a glory of thanks and prayer."

A nobler tribute was never paid to any hymn or hymn-writer.

VI.

Milton at Chalfont.

A previous communication on "Milton and London" (Seed Sower, May, 1904) drew attention to the woeful fact that the city in which its greatest poet first saw the light, lived for half a century, died, and was buried, had erected no statue in his honour and regard. This neglect has at last been rectified, and a noble monument upraised adjoining St. Giles's Church, Cripplegate, the place of his interment.

It is, however, a curious circumstance that Milton pilgrims pay fewer visits to Cripplegate St. Giles's, London, than to Chalfont St. Giles, Buckingham.

Chalfont St. Giles is a quiet little village, lying in a hollow of the hills, and comprising one straggling street of old houses, as shewn in our illustration. The pretty cottage to the right, with its chimney stack and gate, its side to the road, and its garden front, was found by his Quaker friend, Thomas Ellwood, who lived in the adjacent village of Chalfont St. Peter's. The plague was raging in London, and the plague-pits in Bunhill Fields made Milton's house near by so unhealthy that he wished to move out into the country. To this retreat he fled hastily in July (1665), but after spending only eight months in the cottage, he returned to Bunhill Fields, the plague having ceased its ravages. It was thus but a short residence. Moreover, the beauties of the place were, alas, hidden from the old man's eyes, which had been blind for thirteen years! He had to be led about the field paths, or to grope his way along the roads.

Although representing so little of Milton, this cottage at Chalfont is yet interesting. It is the only house inhabited by him which is still standing; hence we may with delicious literalness tread in the poet's very steps as we pass from room to room, upstairs and down, in this little picturesque home.

And there is yet a further interest in the knowledge that within this cottage a small incident took place which brought about a great result. When Ellwood visited Milton in this "pretty box" the poet lent him his manuscript of *Paradise Lost*, and when the Quaker returned it he ventured to remark : "Thou hast said much here of Paradise Lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise Found?" whereupon, continues Ellwood in his record, Milton "made no answer, but sat some time in a muse." *Paradise Lost* was not, however, completed at Chalfont, as it is sometimes stated; neither can it be proved that *Paradise Regained* was actually commenced in this cottage, though the thought of it there took shape.

Milton, after his return to London, had eight more years spared to him. His cottage at Chalfont was saved from demolition and purchased by the nation in 1887.

Ellwood lived on until 1713, died at seventy-four, and was buried at the Quakers' Meeting House at Jordans, not far away, where you may visit his grave to-day, and find that of William Penn near by.

Frank K. Freeston.

Notes of Guild Addresses.

FROM THE POETS.

FOUR POEMS BY TENNYSON.

ST. TELEMACHUS, OR THE MARTYR OF HUMANITY.

(Texts on the crime of cruelty: Exodus xx., 13; Psalm lxxiv., 10; Proverbs xii., 10; Lamentations iv., 3-4; Titus iii., 3; also, the parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke x., 25-37.)

Describe the old gladiotorial combats of Rome—the lust for blood—the delight in brutal sports—Christians thrown to the lions —men skinned alive in the Colosseum.—On special occasions as many as 300 pairs of gladiators fought in the arena in one day. One hundred pairs was the fashionable number for private entertainments. Trojan celebrated his triumph over Decebalus by a show of 5,000 pairs of human butchers. In every considerable town of the Roman Empire, from Britain to Syria, an amphitheatre was to be found for this brutal and degrading amusement. Yet, when we shudder at this horrible tale, we must remember it is only fifty years since bear-baiting was prohibited in England, and only twenty-six years since slavery with all its horrors, its Legrees, bloodhounds, whips, etc., was put down in the United States.

Telemachus, an Egyptian hermit, living in the desert, suddenly journeyed to Rome, and arriving on the day of a gladiatorial show, was hurried with the crowd into the Colosseum. Horrified at the spectacle, he ran down the stairs, leapt over the barriers, and rushed between the combatants, forbidding them, in the name of Jesus, to take each other's lives. The spectators of the murderous fray, possessed with the drunken glee of the demon who delights in such bloodshed, stoned to death the preacher of peace. The revolt of feeling caused by this event was so great that the Emperor put a stop to these butcheries, and decreed

"That Rome no more should wallow in this old lust
Of Paganism, and make her festal hour
Dark with the blood of man who murder'd man."

AKBAR'S DREAM, OR RELIGIOUS TOLERATION.

(Read: Numbers xi., '4-30; Luke ix., 49-56 1 Corinthians x., 27.)

Almost every great religion of the world has made the mistake of thinking itself to be the only true and God-given religion for men. Men have failed to recognise the work and presence of God anywhere else but in their own prophets. They have persecuted all who would not accept their creeds and practices. Jesus taught the great lesson of toleration. The Bible, in many places, admits the inspiration of prophets of other races besides the Jews (see Acts x., 3, 4, 5). Remark on the persecutions of Catholics by Protestants, and of Protestants by Catholics, of Dissenters by Churchmen, of Stundists in Russia, etc. Then tell the story of Akbar's dream. Akbar, a great Mogul emperor, of enlightened mind, ruled over fifteen large provinces in India, inhabited by races of different creeds and worship. Himself a follower of Mahomet, he was urged by his counsellors to compel all his subjects to adopt that faith, and to persecute and put to death those who refused. But, his bosom friend and chosen guide, one Abul Fazl, persuaded him to the wiser course of toleration, "to hunt the tiger of oppression out of office," and "alchemise old hates into the gold of love," and "beat back the menacing poison of intolerant priests." Akbar dreamt one night that he had built a great fane, which was neither temple, pagoda, mosque, nor church, but a place where all might worship who loved Truth, and Peace, and Justice. Then he dreamt that he died, and that his son after him pulled the sacred fane to pieces, and brought back the old sad times of religious bigotry and persecution. Yet, while he grieved to see the ruin of his handiwork, another race arose who fitted stone to stone again that sacred place, and Truth and Peace and Love and Justice came and dwelt therein, and men learned to serve that Infinite,

"Within us, as without, that All-in-all,
And over all, the never-changing One
And ever-changing Many, in praise of Whom
The Christian bell, the cry from off the Mosque,
And vaguer voices of Polytheism,
Make but one music, harmonising 'Pray.'"

KAPIOLANI, OR THE DOWNFALL OF SUPERSTITION.

(Texts: 1 Samuel iv., 3-11; 2 Kings xviii., 4; Mark vii., 1-8.)

Superstition manifests itself in different ways—from the African savage who makes a monkey his god, to so-called civilised people who will not sit down to dinner if thirteen are at the table. The essence of superstition is having a low view of God and Providence, when it is possible to have a higher. It believes in chance or luck, instead of cause and effect; it sets store by *things*—sacred places, customs, days, instead of life and conduct; it thinks there is something capricious in the action of God; or that there is real religion in fasting, or washing the hands, or turning to the east, or bowing to the name of Jesus, or using the sign of the cross. To make an idol of the Bible, or the church, to set them above reason, is superstition. It is superstition to think that salvation and acceptance with God depends on holding a certain creed, or that there is any merit in having certain theological opinions. Merit is in motive, in effort, in conduct, in character.

All races have risen above superstition by defying the particular custom, thing, or idol which people held sacred. So Kapiolani, a great chieftainess, who lived in Hawii at the beginning of this century, broke down the terrible superstitious dread of her people, and won them to Christianity by openly defying the priests of the local goddess. This goddess was a spirit of evil, who lived in a great lake of fire—volcanic—up in the mountains, and no woman might come near her abode. Certain red berries were sacred to her, and a woman was forbidden to touch them or, it was believed, she would die. The queen gathered these berries, climbed the mountain, and threw them into the fiery lake—into the face of the supposed goddess, and returned unhurt.

Blest be the voice of the teacher who calls to us,
Set yourselves free.
Noble the Saxon who hurl'd at his idol a valorous
weapon in olden England!
Great and greater, and greatest of women, island
heroine, Kapiolani
Clomb the mountain, and flung the berries, and
dared the goddess, and freed the people
Of Hawa-i-ee!

THE CHURCHWARDEN AND THE CURATE, OR THE CRAWLING WAY OF THE COWARD AND WORLDLING.

(Texts: 1 Kings xxii., 13-28; Acts iv., 18-21.)

Although this is a humorous poem it is by no means unsuited for a guild topic. It illustrates the gross superstition that prevailed only a generation ago in many country places. This Lincolnshire farmer actually believed that the Baptists, who used his pond for the rite of immersion, poisoned its water by the sins they left behind, resulting in the death of the cow drinking there. This, however, is incidental. The point of the poem is in the sneaking, crawling, cowardly prudence of the farmer, who has found it pay *not* to be frank and outspoken, and who advises the young curate, whom he has known from boyhood, and who is the son of the vicar of the parish, never to rebuke the sins of the rich and the great. He points out to him that the vicar, his father, had never obtained promotion, and never would, because of his plain speaking. The way for the young curate to prosper is to

"Cotton down to thy betters, and keeäp thysen
to thysen,
But niver not speäk plaain out, if tha wants to
git forrards a bit,
But creaäp along the hedge-bottoms, an' thou'll
be a bishop yit."

He quotes the example of the actual bishop of the diocese:—

"They says' 'at he coom'd fra nowt—
Binn i' traäde. Sa I warrants 'e never said
haafe wot 'e thowt,
But 'e creaäpt an' 'e crawl'd along, till 'e feeäld
'e could howd his oän,
Then 'e married a greät yerl's darter, an' sits o'
the Bishop's throän.

Contrast this with the zealous courage of Micaiah and the boldness of Peter. Show the need of courage in life. Courage is not rashness nor rudeness; it is the determination, at all costs, to be true in speech and in life; not to keep silence when wrong is a-doing, not to be afraid of majorities. See Norman Macleod's hymn, "Courage, brother, do not stumble," and Russell Lowell's poem with the fine lines,

"They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three."

JOSEPH WOOD.

Seed Corn.

If religion has done nothing for your temper, it has done nothing for your soul.

You cannot dream yourself into a character: you must hammer and forge yourself one.

The secret of life is not to do what one likes, but to try to like that which one has to do; and one does come to like it—in time.

To resist with success the frigidity of old age one must combine the body, the mind, and the heart. To keep these in parallel vigor one must exercise, study, and love.

It is they who deny themselves who shall not be denied; they who labour on earth who shall rest in heaven; they who bear the cross who shall wear the crown; they who seek to bless others who shall be blessed.

To hope for the final and absolute supremacy of goodness is among the finest and most rational exercises of Christian virtue. It is doubt that is weakness; it is pessimism that is the real denial of the Christian faith.

If we be men and women we do not so much care to be in heaven as to have heaven in us.

Outwardly, thou mayst be doing the work of thy calling: inwardly, if thou commend thy work to God, thou mayst be with him in the third heaven.

Self-denial lies at the base of all noble living and of every form of noble activity; and no one attains to supreme moral excellence or to a high degree of skill in any art or profession without thoroughly subjecting impulse, inclination, and passion to the higher and finer ends toward which he moves.

Humility is perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, or irritated, or sore, or disappointed. It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed and despised.

No man need seek after sacrifice; let him seek after life, and opportunities of sacrifice will seek him.

Wherever there is life there is struggle.

We lay it down as an elemental principle of religion that no large growth in holiness was ever gained by one who did not take time to be often and long alone with God. Not otherwise can the great central idea of God enter into a man's life, and dwell there supreme.

There is such a thing as putting ourselves in the way of God's overflowing love, and letting it beat upon us, till the response of love to him comes, not by struggle, not even by deliberation, but by *necessity*, as the echo comes when the sound strikes the rock.

The daily round of duty is full of probation and of discipline: it trains the will, heart, and conscience. We need not to be prophets or apostles. The commonest life may be full of perfection. The duties of home are a discipline for the ministries of heaven.

Heaven knows nothing of solitary religion. Association is God's plan for spiritual life, not isolation.

Modulation.

A skilled organist was leading a large congregation in congregational singing. The air was heavy, and it was difficult for the congregation to keep up the pitch. Instead of trying to force the audience up to the key, the organist, when he came to the interlude, by skilful and almost imperceptible modulation, dropped the piece half a tone. Probably no one in the great congregation noticed that any change had been made in the key, but somehow the next verse was easier to sing.

There are imperceptible modulations in every human life—changes of key sometimes up and sometimes down. Occasionally the tone of a life is lowered almost unconsciously to the man who is living it. The gradual accommodations of life are met with in many directions. They are physical, or they are moral or intellectual. It is hard always to

work up, to sing up, to live up, to think and feel up, to a standard key. We like to have the ethical pitch lowered a little for our convenience, and sometimes the transition is so gradual that we hardly know that we have dropped. We imagine, in our fond self-consideration, that we are living up to the Golden Rule when we have dropped far below it. We do not discover it, perhaps, until we measure ourselves against that rule, or against some other life which has embodied it, and which is proof against contractions of temperature. Thus it is absolutely necessary that in ethics, as in music, there should be some standard pitch, some recognised designation of key, by which we may test our position and find out just where we are.

Notes and Jottings.

We have no wish to revive in detail the controversy about Manchester College, Oxford, which was settled by a decisive vote of the Trustees on November 29th. It is to be hoped that the College will be allowed to continue its useful work for a season, at any rate, free from captious criticism or attempts to prove that the largest freedom and loyalty to a noble ideal are hindrances to its practical usefulness. The vote, however, has a significance far beyond the range of the special questions at issue. It shows that we have a strong reserve of faith and enthusiasm for critical moments. The love of freedom, with its privileges and its possible hazards, is in our blood, and the heart and intellect of our people still respond to its call. One thing is clearly impossible to us—enthusiasm for a policy of exclusion.

We imagine that to a number of people not only the vote, but also the important legal opinion of Mr. Haldane communicated to the meeting by Mr. Worthington, must have come as an immense relief. We find it hard to believe that even its advocates can have liked the policy of limiting the benefits of the College. Some of them may have been forced into an uncongenial attitude by what appeared to them to be the legal aspects of the case. But all true lovers of freedom must have hoped that they would not be obliged to prescribe limits, and from any suspicion of this sort Mr. Haldane's opinion has delivered us. We may be content to accept it and to proclaim anew the open and undenominational character of the College. It is not likely to be criticised or called in question, unless indeed there are some strange people among us who wish to believe otherwise, because they dislike free institutions.

It is not every institution that can weather a storm so easily as Manchester College. We have had recently a most instructive object lesson in the disabilities imposed by tests and limiting classes. The Trustees of Cheshunt College have been anxious to promote a scheme of amalgamation with Hackney College. We take it that they have satisfied themselves that it is the right policy to pursue in the interests of the institution for which they are responsible, and we have not seen that this has been called in question. But the Board of Education has intervened with a firm refusal to sanction the proposed scheme, on the ground that all the trustees, teachers, and students of Cheshunt College are bound to subscribe to an elaborate doctrinal scheme, and amalgamation with an institution which does not accept the Fifteen Articles of its deed of foundation would be contrary to law. It is the case of the Free Church of Scotland repeated in miniature—one more illustration of the difficulty in which men find themselves when they attempt to regulate the religious life and the movement of theological thought by tests and principles of exclusion.

The *Christian World*, in an article upon the Cheshunt case, seems inclined to join in the popular clamour against the Law and the stupidity of Government departments. The obligation of trusts upon which property is held is not to be disposed of in quite this off-hand fashion. Liberty is not being stifled by the powers that be, but by the elaborate precautions which have been taken against the growth of liberty. Attention should be directed to the whole question of trust-deeds and subscriptions. It is this, and not the action of the legal executive, that requires radical reformation. The only way out of the *impasse* in Scotland is by the Royal Commission, which has been appointed, and we are inclined to think that measures of relief from

deed obligations will have to be given in many other places as well. Only we should like to see far clearer signs than are evident at present of a refusal to impose similar obligations in future. We fear that the modern ecclesiastical mind has not outgrown the desire to safeguard popular orthodoxy and the sanctity of its own opinions.

The appointment of Dr. Gore as the first Bishop of Birmingham is a matter of interest and congratulation. For one thing, no better appointment could have been made from the point of view of the dignity and usefulness of the new See; for another, it places a man of real religious power and attractiveness in a sphere where he will have ample scope. No doubt there will be many details of organisation to be attended to, but the See is of a manageable size, and the Bishop will be able to be something more than an official. There is something positively saddening in the way in which a man of brilliant gifts like Creighton became the victim of the rush and whirl of London, with at least twice as much to do every day as any one man ought to have attempted. Dr. Gore is pre-eminent as a preacher, a religious writer, and a personal force. In all these directions Birmingham will give him unique opportunities, and his presence in the midst of its civic and commercial life cannot fail to raise the tone and widen the outlook for all sorts and conditions of men.

Guild News.

The Mansford Street Guild, London, entertained 100 blind people and their guides on Saturday evening, December 4th. The Rev. Gordon Cooper gave them a cheery welcome, after which a substantial tea was much appreciated. This was followed by a little social intercourse. The guests then enjoyed a concert, to which two of themselves contributed. During the evening Mr. Mead and Mr. Plumbridge thanked the hosts on their behalf, and the thoughtful service of fully fifty willing helpers was rewarded with the consciousness of successful achievement.

On Tuesday, December 13th *The Highgate* Guild had the pleasure of hearing Rev. F. K. Freeston deliver his lecture on "Joseph Priestley." The subject was illustrated by most interesting lantern slides, which were much appreciated by the audience.

Birmingham Guild of Kindness.—Two lectures on "John Wesley's Journal" have been given by the Warden, the Rev. Joseph Wood. The Junior Guild (ages 9-14) is in full working order, with a membership of 170.

The following extract from the monthly report of the *Young People's Religious Union* of America will be read with interest:—

LENDING PAPERS.

For the benefit of Unions whose members are unable to write essays or to speak at the meetings, we keep a supply of papers at headquarters. Any or all of these papers may be borrowed by a Union, at any time, by simply applying to me a few days before they are wanted. Will Unions kindly return the papers after the meeting at which they are used, so that I may have them ready for another call? And will anyone who has a new paper that may help some other Union add a copy of it to our collection?

Here follows a list of the papers that we already have, and we hope by the help of Unions to add new ones very soon.

EMILY B. OSBORN,
Secretary.

Y. P. R. U. LENDING PAPERS.

Robert Louis Stevenson, Clarence H. Knowlton.
William Henry Furness, Edward H. Hall.
Paul the Man.
Reason in Religion, Carlton E. Ladd.
The Resurrection, Worcester South Society.
The Bible: A Guide to Right Living, Cohasset Union.
Americans and Foreigners, Lynn Union.
Samuel Longfellow, John White Chadwick.
Transmission of Power, Cosman Y. P. R. U.
William Henry Furness, Edward Everett Hale.
Self Control, Guild, Florence, Mass.
The Good of the Past and The Joy of the Present, Y. P. R. U., Montpelier.
Our Duty to our Church.
What is Worship? Its Need To-day.
The George Junior Republic, W. C. Gannett.
Thanksgiving, Lynn Union.
Neighbourliness and Social Reform.
The Christian Spirit, Lynn Union.
A Plea for Enthusiasm in the Sunday School.
Our Church. Its Belief and Duty.
Book Friends, Winkley Guild.
The Pilgrim Fathers, Y. P. R. U., Norwell.
What can we do to Improve our Town in Beauty, Health, and Education, Y. P. R. U., Tyngsboro Guild.
The Work of the American Unitarian Association, E. I. Hargrave.
Religion in the Market, Ernest G. Bancroft.
Moral Courage.
William Ellery Channing, Geo. W. Hinckley, (Dorchester).
Spiritual Athletics.
The Average Man.
The Bible as a Source of Religious Inspiration, A. M. Jackson.

News from the Field.

Among other changes in our congregations since our last issue may be noted the *welcomes* given to *Rev. J. M. Whiteman* at *Burnley*, and to *Rev. W. G. Price* at *Stalybridge;* and the *resignations* of *Rev. J. Kertain Smith* at *Belper* and *Rev. H. Rawlins* at *Denton*. We observe also the *appointment* of *Rev. T. J. Jenkins* to *Hinckley*.

One of our ministers, the *Rev. L. J. Jones*, of *Plumstead*, has been elected for the second time to the office of *Mayor* in his borough.

Very soon the congregation at *Leeds* and the *British and Foreign Unitarian Association* will be giving a hearty welcome to the *Rev. Charles Hargrove* on his return from his interesting missionary journey to our friends at the Antipodes, and that welcome will be shared in by troops of friends and well-wishers all over the country

The *Home Missionary College* has been continuing its campaign in Ireland to raise its needed £20,000, and has met with substantial success. The meetings at *Comber* and *Moneylea* were large and enthusiastic, and many contributions were given. There is much still to be done, but the earnest men who are at work will not cease their labours until they have fully accomplished their object.

There has been a remarkable meeting at *Oxford* in connection with our College there. Certain administrative acts by the Committee were challenged by some of the Trustees; but when the discussion was over the Committee found themselves supported by an overwhelming vote of the Trustees. The discussion was carried on with good feeling and temper. Every one present evidently loved the College and was eager to support it in all its highest aims after the largest comprehension. There was no contrariety of opinion in this great matter, but details of working were challenged by a substantial minority of the Trustees. Committee and Professors were no doubt comforted by the decision reached, but it will be well to broaden the basis of the Committee so that details of administration may be carefully examined so that friction may be hereafter avoided. The supporters of the College will rejoice to think that its basis is honoured by all our people, and that there is a determination that it shall always be a free school for free men who love the Universal Church of God.

Active work has been going on in many of our congregations and associations through the agency of Sales of Work and Bazaars to raise money for the furtherance of the good cause. We observe that *Dover*, *Holbeck*, *Dudley*, *Coventry*, *Portsmouth*, and *Northampton* have been busy in this direction, and have been successfully gathering in an abundant fruitage. But these efforts have culminated in the *East Cheshire* Bazaar in *Manchester*, which raised nearly £3,000, and the *Midland Christian Union* Bazaar in *Birmingham*, which totalled more than *£4,650*. These are the giant efforts of the past month. The amounts raised have been very encouraging, but in each case there is a reasonable hope that further contributions will come in, so that the sums asked for will be completely raised.

In connection with the *Birmingham* Bazaar a handsome and artistic Handbook was published, illustrated by portraits of the Midland ministers and church buildings, and enriched by details of the history of the various congregations, which make the book a valuable and pleasing memento of the Midlands which many friends in all parts of the country would like to possess. It may be purchased through *Herbert New, Esq.*, of *Birmingham*, or at the *Book Room*, *Essex Hall*, *London*.

Useful meetings of the *Scottish Sunday School Union* have been held in *Glasgow*, and of the *South Cheshire Association* at *Chester*. At the latter meeting a valuable paper was read by *Mr. W. Vickery*, of *Shrewsbury*. The paper was printed in extenso in "*The Christian Life*."

It is interesting to note the tremendous hold which Sunday Schools have on the nation. There are a million more Sunday scholars in attendance, though the attendance is voluntary, than there are in the Day Schools, where the attendance is compulsory. We might, if we would, find in the proper working of our Sunday Schools the solution of our problem of religious education for the young.

The *Manchester Unitarian Association* is continuing its good work of visiting the congregations affiliated with it. All accounts tell of the usefulness of these visits. The example might profitably be followed throughout the country.

There was a good deal of vigour in the recent meeting of the *London District Unitarian Association*. Capital speeches were made by H. Chatfeild Clarke, Sir John D. Lawrence, M.P., and the *Rev. Burt Estes Howard, Ph.D.*, a new comer among us from the Presbyterians of *Los Angeles, of California*, and a Professor in one of the American Universities. He seems to have found his spiritual home among our free people.

There is a great stirring among the dry bones. The newspapers and the clergy are discussing the question, "Do we believe?" and whosoever reads carefully between the lines will discover that so far as the old creeds are concerned the answer is an emphatic "*No.*" Meanwhile, in *Wales*, especially *South Wales*, among the miners, there is a seething, hysterical, and pathetic religious excitement going on which belongs to the old days of wild and passionate unreason. A flood of ungoverned zeal is bursting over the country. We trust it may sober down and leave some steady results in cleaner lives and holier ideals.

We go forward into the New Year with new hope.

Dec. 16th. SCRUTATOR.

THE TEMPLAR PRESS, 168, EDMUND STREET, BIRMINGHAM.